

The Times-Dispatch

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 21, 1913.

MAP THE COURSE OF TAX REFORM.

Repeated reading of the chart enables the political diagnostician to determine with the finality of fact that Virginia's system of taxation is the most grievous ill of the body politic. The supreme matter is, therefore, how the plague shall be driven out. That being so, the consultation of those who seek to destroy the very root of this source of falsehood, fraud, injustice and inequality should bring together a vast assemblage of the suffering and the stricken. The result of such a conference should be a definite plan of campaign against the abomination.

Upon two conditions depends the success of the State Tax Conference to be held in Richmond in July. First, it must be attended by a very great number of representatives of every interest in the Commonwealth, commercial and agricultural, rural and urban; second, the conference must unite upon some one plan for tax reform.

The Richmond Chamber of Commerce has determined to call a conference of business men, representing the commercial organizations in the various cities and towns of Virginia. The farmers, whose interest in and demand for tax reform is just as intense and just as extensive as that of the business men, should be equally well represented in the consultation. The farmers' organizations, large and small, should be asked to send delegates to the meeting. It is in the country and not in the city that the bulk of the opposition to tax reform is to be found. No degree of tax revision can be secured unless the cities and counties co-operate. The merchant and the farmer must fight shoulder to shoulder for the establishment of a square deal for one another. In taxation, double influence and double importance will be attached to the recommendation of the Richmond conference if its conclusions represent the joint opinion of the business men and the farmers.

The second need is for general agreement upon some one plan for tax reform. The danger that lies in disagreement is well stated by the Lynchburg News: "If the members of the conference cannot unite with substantial unanimity upon the plan to be proposed by the legislative committee of the Richmond Chamber of Commerce or upon some other plan, the fact will tell, we fear, to complicate an already rather confused situation and embarrass the forces now warring for the destruction of the present indefensible and inequitable tax policy. This is not said in a spirit of pessimism, but rather as a way of helpful warning and of earnest suggestion, too, that every member of the conference shall go to Richmond with flexible frame of mind and broad, generous purpose, to go just as far as conscience and good sense will permit in yielding preconceived opinions as to details in order to promote what may rightly be regarded as a generally desired result."

If the Richmond conference is a thoroughly representative assembly, and if it maps out one clear course to be followed, its conclusion will largely shape the policy of the General Assembly. The voice of a representative conference will be the voice of the people themselves.

AN ANGLO-GERMAN DEAL.

It has never been any secret that one of the most ambitious, if not the most ambitious, dream of Kaiser William is that of building up a great Germano-African empire, corresponding as far as possible to the British empire in the Orient.

It was to the end of realization of that dream that Germany made trouble with France in the matter of the latter's Moroccan program, with the object and result of forcing from the French government the ceding to Germany of certain territory in the French Congo, in compensation for permitting France a free hand in Morocco.

When Lord Haldane was on his "peace mission" to Berlin some months back, and having various "conversations" with the Kaiser and Von Bethmann-Hollweg, a deal was made in the press about negotiations over German acquisition of Portuguese possessions in Africa and about British consent thereto. How far the negotiations proceeded was never made public, it is indeed, they were really very official, but it appears that the rock on which the split came was a question of granting or agreeing to cession to Germany of certain ports, without command of which, no matter what her expansion in the interior of the continent, she would be bottled up.

The German Chancellor, in this connection, practically charged that Great Britain failed to prove her willingness, by her works, and there the question appeared to have been dropped.

Now, however, according to semi-official British authority, it has been taken up again, and a definite agreement has been reached, under which Great Britain withdraws all opposition to German expansion in Central Africa in consideration of Germany's surrendering to British control the Bagdad Railway's eastern terminal, and the possession of the strategic harbor of Koweit, on the Persian Gulf.

This means, on the one hand, the

absorption by purchase or otherwise by Germany of the bulk of Portuguese African territory, with a large area of the Belgian Congo, and a clean sweep for Germany to construct her projected across-continent railroad from east to west.

On the other hand, it insures to Great Britain dominance in Asiatic Turkey, with an immense coil of vantage in checking Russian aggression and designs in ancient Iran.

BARGAIN DAYS FOR CITY BONDS.

The Finance Committee of the Richmond Council is in a quandary about selling our city bonds at a figure that will mean reasonable money for the improvements urgently needed. Something like \$1,750,000 is wanted for permanent construction; yet the market for bonds prevents the borrowing of this amount unless the securities are sold at a discount that makes the interest rate nearly 4 1/2 per cent. We pass on this hint from the New York World—sell the bonds directly to the people of Richmond.

It is pointed out that the Mayor of Philadelphia has succeeded in selling to the people a small issue, and so gotten money on very good terms. Even more interesting and modern is the story of the department store in St. Paul, Minn., that bought \$100,000 worth of improvement bonds for sale at cost along with dress goods and furnishings. This is good advertising; keeps the money in circulation at home; enables small savings to be invested easily and with safety; and builds the city at a cheap rate of interest. A store that serves both its customers and the city at once has a pretty big idea of civic pride.

The World adds that city bonds pay better interest than savings accounts. They are gilt-edged and can be turned into cash in a comparatively short time should the citizen need money. The thrifty French have long helped the community and themselves in this way. There must be plenty of small savings in Richmond that could be brought into the bond market were the right effort made.

SMALLER FARMS IN VIRGINIA.

The absolute increase in the value of farm property in Virginia in the last decade was ten times what it was in the preceding decade, yet the average size of the Virginia farm decreased from 245 acres in 1870 to 106 acres in 1911. One hundred and eighty-four thousand farms were reported by the census of 1910, an increase of 16,000 farms in ten years. The total value of farm property in 1912 was about \$630,000,000, and by the next census should be \$1,000,000,000.

These figures of the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Immigration abundantly justify its preaching the gospel of smaller farms. The theory is that it is better to have 200 farms of fifty acres each than 100 farms of 100 acres each, or that it is better to have 100 farms of ten acres each than ten farms of 100 acres. The small farm is best from the standpoint of the community, of society, of religion, of economics, and of production. It increases the productivity of the soil. It improves the social conditions of country communities, because it means more people in them. Where many small farms are clustered, there are better churches and better schools than are to be found where a few large plantations adjoin.

Large farms have been the leading cause for the decline in the yield of the soil. They are often tilled in prodigious fashion. As a rule, they are not as fruitful as they once were. In other countries, where the average area of the farm is but a few acres, the yield per acre is increasing, but in the United States the tendency is the other way.

The necessity for smaller farms is a matter of deep public concern. A decrease in the area of each farm means an increase in the general yield, and that increase is the goal of the progressive agricultural movement. The tendency in the South is toward the cutting up of large farms, and is a most encouraging sign.

HAPGOOD AND HARPERS.

Thinking people who want a journal of information and comment upon the serious affairs of this nation, will welcome the news that Norman Hapgood has acquired control of the old "Harper's Weekly," and will after June 1 have entire editorial authority. His financial associates in the new venture are the McClure publications. Although the plans are not definite, it is thought that no fiction or pictures save those to illuminate the news articles will be published. This hints at something resembling the standard English weeklies. The ideal aimed at is evidently a constructive interpretation of our civilization, based on information of an authentic kind.

There is certainly plenty of room for a high-class paper of elevated tone and independent view. As editor of "Collier's," Mr. Hapgood did fine work in informing and directing enlightened public opinion. He has a large and enthusiastic following over the country. Without his hand, "Collier's" has not hit very heavily, and the only other news weekly, "Leslie's," is neither independent nor interesting. Indeed, the humorous "Life" has been performing the best service in this field of sane comment on the passing show, even though limited by its own nature.

Many men will welcome the idea of a weekly devoted to independent politics. Hapgood claims to belong to no party, but to express an independent opinion. His paper will contain much Washington news, as news and not as partisan propaganda. It is announced as distinctly favorable to the present administration, and to all progressive movements wherever they may originate. Foreign affairs will be handled broadly. Especially are we glad that the intellectual interests will receive intelligent treatment. Mr. Hapgood

himself is an admirable dramatic critic, and made this department of "Collier's" peculiarly stimulating. Literature and business will be main themes for Hapgood's "Harper's." In short, "the publication will appeal primarily to those men and women who take a periodical largely for its information and its thought." The word women here used suggests a large field, since the new editor is an earnest student and critic of the feminist era.

Old readers will regret the passing of Harper's Weekly. As the "journal of civilization" it furnished pictures and comment for nearly two generations. From its war pictures, made from rough sketches, many thousands received their most vivid impressions of history in the making. It printed the cartoons of Tom Nast, that lashed the Tweed Ring into oblivion. It has been edited by men like George William Curtis and George Harvey. We trust that some of the best of its ideals and fighting spirit may be passed on to the new generations of journalist, who hope to spread light and help the nation.

BUILDING BRIDGES FOR TO-MORROW.

Richmond certainly needs a new bridge across the James from Ninth Street. Does Richmond need a \$500,000 bridge at this point? Nothing cheap or ugly should be built as a main artery between the two sides of the river. A bridge is an organic part of the foundation of the city. It is in every sense a permanent improvement, and should be constructed to last and to add beauty to the city. Filminess or cheap and light construction should be considered here last of anywhere. This is manifest.

We doubt, therefore, the wisdom of those gentlemen of the Council who favor an iron structure to replace the present bridge. A suitable concrete viaduct worthy of Richmond, both on the north and the south, seems the ideal. Yet need it cost \$500,000? The Times-Dispatch believes that it would be wise to consider the growth of the city farther west. Would the city not gain more, in case \$500,000 is expended on bridges, by putting half of that amount in a connecting link somewhere out near the Pump-House or beyond the Belt Line? This looks now like throwing a span between two bits of woods, but once put the bridge there and give proper car service, and both banks of the James would blossom out as the most desirable residence section of the entire city.

At present these magnificent bluffs, with beautiful water, scenery and lofty sites for villas, are empty and neglected. The very garden spots of the community are not used. In other towns the river is becoming the centre for fine residences. Here we go back to the flats, where there is no opportunity for picturesque or diversity of lands. In every way the south bank of the river is just as well well developing as the north. The only reason it is not so far along in the inaccessibility of the situation. Just for the sake of a bigger and more beautiful city of homes, why not provide the means of approach to the best place for homes? There is no reason for spending any huge sum on the downtown bridge. There is reason for adding to the city by linking up its various parts.

When is Richmond to celebrate the bicentenary of the discovery of the mint julep?

Miss Minnie Slentz, of Steubenville, Ohio, said under oath the other day: "Real kissing becomes monotonous during the second year, intermittent from the fourth to the sixth, and stops entirely before the eighth." It never stops in Richmond.

What's become of Alfred Austin and Ella Wheeler Wilcox?

An Indiana man who has been visiting Mount Vernon says: "I never come to Washington without spending a few hours weeping at the tomb of the Father of His Country." Now we know why the "Jeems" is so high of late.

The complexion of the strawberries these days looks less like it was put on out of a rouge box and more like it grew.

We want The Times-Dispatch daily pictures of the fans with the rings on 'em to look happy. Will the Colts kindly say: "Smile, please?"

In a neat booklet titled Bulletin I, the Virginia Folk Lore Society presents its constitution, aims and membership to the public. The formal organization of the society took place at Richmond College on April 17, with Dr. Alphonso Smith, of the University of Virginia, as the guiding spirit. Dr. Smith is the president, and Professor Walter Montgomery, of Richmond College, secretary and treasurer. The dues of the society are \$1 a year, and the membership already exceeds 100, from all sections of the State. The most interesting part of this original publication is the list of some fifty-six ballad variants that have been found in the United States. These are survivals of the 305 English and Scotch ballads, most of them originating in the fifteenth century, which have been collected and formally numbered. The field in Virginia is remarkably large, and has not been at all worked. Even in a few weeks three variants reported to the society have been added to the list, and have been recorded nowhere else in this country. There is every reason to hope that Virginia will lead all the other States in the number of survivals and the interest of this branch of folk lore, and every one is asked to co-operate with the organization by sending in such material as chance may put in the way.

The Japanese reputation for self-control seems to be suffering these days. Caruso's vocal cords make 550 vibrations a second when he sings C-sharp, and he gets about \$2.25 for each vibrate.

On the Spur of the Moment

By Roy K. Moulton

"I would like to remark," said Farmer Brown, "that I don't hanker for me crown. I am quite willing to ejaculate. I'm glad I ain't a king or potentate. There never is an anarchistic group 'Twin' to put arsenic in my soup. I kin travel around a bit and learn. And nobuddy is tryin' with might and main to tear up the track for to wreck my train."

I open my mail calm and serene. I don't never get no infernal machine. When I go ridin' the sights to see Nobuddy throws hushbush at me. Nobuddy in nothin' to get my place. I ain't afraid of no sort of did. I kin dine in my shirt-sleeves if I wish. I kin eat with my wife, for you kin bet I ain't tied down by no etiquette. I kin travel around a bit and learn. I see that they're all tucked away in bed. And they don't have to marry their cousins, by heck. But kin pick their partners from the whole blamed deers. I see. This royalty business don't appeal to me. There's nothing in it fur a kin see. I ain't hankled no more for no great throne. I've got a little kingdom all of my own."

Signs of the Times.

King Alfalfa was, according to reports, injured in the market garden. Doctors have not stated whether that is a vital spot.

Sam Blythe says Mr. Bryan is feckless, unscrupulous and verberous. Outside of that, he is doubtless all right.

President Huerta, of Mexico, is tired of his job, and the job seems to be getting tired of him.

Chicago person says that erring women may be reformed by corsets. Sure. Re-formed.

A Bohemian is a man who knows how to eat spaghetti without getting it on the floor or over into the next flat.

There are a few millionaires in this country who are not running garages, but they are very many.

It is stated by one of the truthful scribes in that locality that a Pittsburgh man may be cited before the probate judge for examination as to his sanity, to see if he is fit to be determined to buy and sell for a home instead of buying an automobile. His case is so unusual that it has attracted much attention.

From the Hickeyville Clarion.

Doc Peters has started a vegetable garden out back of his house. He will work on it about three days and then his wife will do the rest.

Miss Euphemia Perkins, our poetess of passion, says she will write for a living in the future. Friends will kindly omit flowers.

Deacon Stubbs's mule Hyacinth is suffering from the artistic temperament, and Doc Hanks has been called in. Doc says he cured the deacon, so he ought to be able to cure the mule.

The fellow who burns the candle at both ends may be extravagant, but it is cheaper than electric lights, at that.

No time to be lost.

When I heard that Pennsylvania had invited the camps of Confederate veterans to attend a great peace jubilee at Gettysburg in 1913, I was proud of the guests of Pennsylvania I made my arrangements to attend and go with the old hater and anti-social element of the members were personal friends.

I turned to myself that the Northern soldiers would give to the whole world a lesson in the value of peace. I felt that the bond of brotherhood would be strengthened between us and that the ties of love and friendship would be made stronger and that our reunited country would be greater than ever before.

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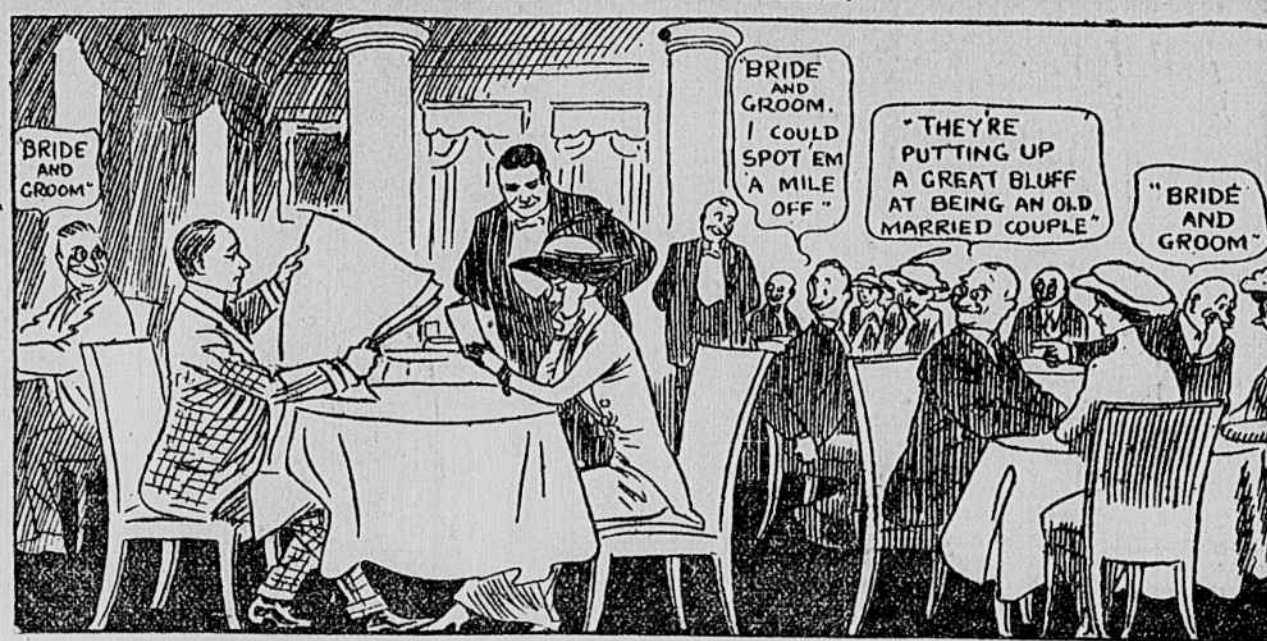
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IDENTIFYING MARRIED FOLKS.

By John T. McCutcheon.

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It is easy to spot a newly married couple, no matter how earnestly they try to appear like old married folks—



But how would you guess this couple? Married or not?

are no commercial frauds, no poisoners of the people's food, no lying trade-marks. There are no tyrannous employers, no striking employees with murder in their hearts and on their lips, no industrial riots, no sin, no crime. Peace is universal, plenty is for all, justice and righteousness reign triumphant.

There are no empty churches or empty pews. Moving-picture houses are being converted into temples of religion. "Township" is spelt with spires. Where once stood the slums, a place of worship smiles its welcome on every block of model tenements. Young men of the highest type are rushing to the ministry in such numbers that civil life must suffer, unless some of them are forced back upon it, and what measure is better fitted for that than inquiries about doctrinal points, which shall rule out most of those who think and admit the stupid and the hypocritical?

Of course, if in this millennium there were any real evangelical work to do, churchmen would not war on their most ardent spirits by trying them as heretics. But in a golden age these elimination tests seem necessary.—New York World.

QUERIES & ANSWERS

Louisiana Purchase. Please inform me how much territory was included in the Louisiana purchase. O. M. \$61,931 square miles.

High School Fund. Does the high school fund go to the salary of teachers doing high school work only, or is it divided among all teachers? TEACHER.

The State Superintendent of Public Instruction. Capitol Building, Richmond, Va., will send you full information.

Rockfish. Is the Virginia post-office, Rockfish, on any railway? How far is it from Lynchburg? DAILY READER.

Slander. Under the law of Virginia, what is the penalty for slander? CONSTANT READER.

Stories of Children, etc. What periodicals would be most likely to take stories of children and animals? S. C.

The Youth's Companion. St. Nicholas.

Race Suicide. Is there any warrant in natural or revealed law or in common sense for the supposition that any person now in existence has any sort of responsibility for the perpetuation of the human race? R. K. D.

Nothing Else to Do. It is impossible not to be moved by the sermon of Dr. Henry Van Dyke upon the heresy charges brought against four young men entering the Presbyterian ministry, one of them his son. It is impossible not to thrill with his indignant challenge: "Whatever comes of the protest, I wish to take my stand with these young men. They are my brothers in the faith. If they are unfit for the ministry, I am unfit. Heresy trials are the delight of the ungodly and the despair of religion. But if such a thing must come, let it be fair and brave and open. Do not try it on eager-hearted, sensitive boys. Try it on a grown man who stands with them in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free."

But we fear Dr. Van Dyke does not understand the situation. His son is six. He has been preaching and teaching thirty-five years. Things have changed since he too was an "eager-hearted, sensitive boy." There are no gunmen, no police gruffers, no purveyors of vice. There

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